

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 109

By Eldridge

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Luna Nell Morton Googe of Jackson.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Luna Nell Morton Googe; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Googe was an exemplary public servant who laid the foundation for the growth of music appreciation in her community through her numerous efforts and contributions to Tennessee's long music history, providing a rich harmonious heritage for future generations; and

WHEREAS, Luna Nell Morton Googe was born on Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 1920, at Morton's Store near Booneville, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, a gifted musician from a young age, Nell Googe began performing at the age of four, and as a young girl she appeared on many music programs, singing, tap dancing, playing piano and accordion, and giving readings; she was also crowned "Little Miss Booneville" at the tender age of ten; and

WHEREAS, Nell Googe received her first music lesson around the age of seven or eight, and by the time she was married in 1939 at the Methodist church in Booneville, Mississippi, Mrs. Googe was already a celebrity for her musical talents; and

WHEREAS, Nell Googe came by her talents honestly, performing on live radio broadcasts at eight years old with her grandmother; passing the gift of musicianship onto her children, Mrs. Googe, with her daughter, Janeen, would travel the "Doodle-Bug train" weekly to Booneville, Missouri, to appear on WBIP with her mother, Luna Morton, as the "Family Trio"; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Googe began teaching music lessons during the Great Depression, and after graduating as salutatorian of the 1938 class at Booneville High School, she attended Blue Mountain College and M.S.C.W. in Columbus, majoring in music; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being a devoted wife, mother, and music teacher, Mrs. Googe resonated as a community leader in many civic and music organizations in Jackson, especially excelling in her sterling efforts to support the Jackson Symphony; and

WHEREAS, Nell Googe served with acumen and alacrity as President of the McDowell Music Club, counselor for the Juvenile and Junior music clubs, President of the Jackson High School P.T.A., and Poetry and Music Chairman for the Jackson Womans' Club; and

WHEREAS, she was also a member of the Jackson Organ Club, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Jackson-Madison Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution for twenty years, serving the latter organization as American Heritage chairman and winning many state and national awards; and

WHEREAS, Nell Googe devoted herself to the causes and scores of the Jackson Symphony from its inception. Mrs. Googe was the first to play the accordion in the Jackson Symphony, receiving a standing ovation for her performance of "The Star-Spangled Banner," and she also performed alongside her daughter, Janeen, and son, George Morton, in the percussion section of both the Jackson Symphony and Corinth Symphony; and

WHEREAS, she served on the board of the Community Concert Association and the Jackson Symphony Association, and topped the charts as the best ticket salesperson for many years in both institutions; Luna Nell Morton Googe sold \$20,000 worth of tickets in 1985 alone, earning the respect and admiration of her peers; and

WHEREAS, Luna Nell Morton Googe served as a vital member of the Jackson Symphony League, spent many years working as its historian, and was named a lifetime honorary board member of the League. In December 2010, she was specially recognized by the Jackson Symphony, as the Christmas Pops concert was dedicated wholly to her, and she was featured in the program with an article entitled "A Googe Legacy"; and

WHEREAS, as an exemplary woman of God, Nell Googe was a member of Skyline Church of Christ and loyally volunteered her efforts to teach singing for the congregation's preschool classes; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Googe was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Googe was married for many years to her devoted husband George Walker Googe, who preceded her in death, as did her parents, Charles Cullen Morton and Luna Lee Morton, a brother, Charles Lee Morton, and a sister, Mary Christelle Morton; and

WHEREAS, she is survived by her daughter, Janeen Googe Smith, the wife of Ward Smith; son, George Morton Googe, the husband of Becky Googe; four grandchildren, Janell Charmaine Smith, Morton Ward Smith, Wendy Lee Googe Williams, the wife of Blake Williams, and Charles Walker Googe; a niece, Anita Morton Cunningham; nephews, John Morton and Frank Morton; and special cousins, Joe Googe Buckly, Betty Googe Buckly, and Juanita Lee Bailey; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Googe leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional musician, community leader, and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Luna Nell Morton Googe, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Luna Nell Morton Googe.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.